

CLAIMS

That which is claimed is:

5 1. A catheter guide apparatus comprising a guide element configured to fit through a tunneler and to releasibly engage a catheter.

10 2. The catheter guide apparatus of claim 1, wherein said guide element further comprises first and second ends, said first end configured to releasibly couple to said catheter.

15 3. The catheter guide apparatus of claim 2, wherein said guide element has a length sufficient such that at least one of said first and second ends extends out of said tunneler when said guide element is positioned within said tunneler.

20 4. The catheter guide apparatus of claim 1, wherein said guide element further comprises a helix adjacent one end, said helix including at least two coils, said spacing between said coils being sufficient to pass said catheter between adjacent ones of said coils.

25 5. The catheter guide apparatus of claim 4, wherein said helix has an internal diameter which is slightly smaller than an external diameter of said catheter.

30 6. The catheter guide apparatus of claim 2, wherein said second end includes a handle.

 7. A catheter feed through guide apparatus comprising an elongated, resilient guide element having first and second ends, said first end configured to releasibly couple to a catheter, said elongated, resilient guide element configured to fit through a tunneler.

 8. A catheter feed through guide apparatus of claim 7, wherein said elongated, resilient guide element has a length sufficient such that at least one of said first and second ends extends out of said tunneler when said guide element is positioned within said tunneler.

8. A catheter feed through guide apparatus of claim 7, wherein said first end includes a helix having a plurality of coils, said spacing between said coils being sufficient to pass said catheter between adjacent ones of said coils.

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9. The catheter feed through guide apparatus of claim 8, wherein said helix has an internal diameter which is slightly smaller than an external diameter of said catheter.

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10. A method for feeding a catheter through a tunneler, comprising attaching said catheter to a guide element, and passing said guide element and attached said catheter through said guide tube.

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11. The method of claim 10, further comprising detaching said catheter from said guide element after passing said guide element and attached said catheter through said tunneler.

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12. A method for positioning a catheter between first and second incisions in a patient, comprising:

- (a) attaching a catheter to a guide element;
- (b) passing said guide element through a tunneler associated with said first and second incisions; and
- (c) detaching said catheter from said guide element.

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13. The method of claim 12, further comprising:

- (a) inserting said tunneler into one of said incisions and positioning said tunneler beneath said patient's skin between said first and second incisions; and
- (b) after passing said guide element through said tunneler and detaching said catheter therefrom, removing said tunneler from one of said incisions while leaving said catheter in place beneath said patient's said skin.

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14. A method for guiding a catheter through a tunneler, comprising:

- (a) coupling a catheter to a first end of a guide element;
- (b) inserting a second end of said guide element into a first end of a tunneler;

- (c) drawing said guide element through said tunneler and removing said guide element from a second end of said tunneler; and
- (d) detaching said catheter from said first end of said guide element.